

the temple first came out to make an estimate, and then the master appeared to see them. The thieves were petrified with terror. Out of mercy he did not punish them, but rather made a Buddha image to be consecrated in the pagoda and performed rites of dedication. Later he lived by the seaside, and preached to passersby. He passed away when he was over eighty.

Even an animal does not forget gratitude, and repays an act of kindness. How, then, could a righteous man¹⁹ fail to have a sense of gratitude?

8

On a Deaf Man Whose Hearing Was Restored Immediately Owing to His Faith in a Mahayana Scripture¹

In the reign of the empress residing at the Palace of Owarida² there was a man whose name was Kinumui no tomonomiya tsuko Gitsū 衣縫作造義通³ who suddenly became seriously ill. He was deaf in both ears and suffered a chronic skin disease which never healed. He said to himself, "My past deeds⁴ influence my life not only in the present but also in the future. It is better to do good and die soon than to live long and be hated by others." Therefore he swept the ground, cleaned the hall, summoned a *dhyāna* master⁵ with all due reverence, and, after purifying himself with holy water, devoted himself to reading a Mahayana scripture 方廣經.⁷

Meanwhile, he experienced an extraordinary sensation and said to the master, "I am hearing the name of a bodhisattva in my ear, so I beg you, Most Venerable Master,⁸ to continue the service." During

19. 義人 *giinin*.

1. Cf. *Sanlō ekotoba* (II, 5), *Fusō ryakkei* (IV, Suiko), *Konjaku monogatari shū* (XIV, 36), etc.

2. Refers to Empress Suiko; see I.6, n. 3.

3. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, Kinumui is the name of an immigrant family.

4. 宿業 *shūkyō* or *shukkyō*; the term is ethically neutral, including both good and evil deeds, but it usually refers to evil deeds.

5. 義禪師 *Gi-zenji* may be a combination of a personal name *Gi* and *zenji*, an honorific title, or a monk who is well-read in scriptures.

6. 香水 *kōzui*, ritually purified water.

7. *Hōkō-kyō*; 方廣 *hōkō* is a shortened compound of 方正 *hōsei*, "square, upright," and 廣大 *kōdai*, "large, great"; hence, in the Buddhist tradition it designates Mahayana. Therefore, *Hōkō-kyō* means Mahayana scripture; for another possible meaning, however, see Chap. II(1)a, n. 8.

8. 大德 *daitoku*; see I.5, n. 43.

the master's performance, one ear was completely healed. With great joy, Gitsū repeated his request to go on, and, as the master went on with the service, both ears were healed. People far and near marveled at the news. We learn that there really exists a mysterious correspondence.⁹

9

On the Reunion in a Foreign Land of a Father with His Child Who Was Carried Away by an Eagle

In the third month, in the spring of the tenth year of the hare, in the reign of the empress who resided in the Palace of Itabuki, Asuka Kawara 飛鳥川原坂葺宮² there was a baby girl in a certain home in a remote village in Shizumi district of Tajima province 但馬國七美郡.³ While she was crawling in the courtyard, an eagle seized her and carried her high into the sky toward the east. Her parents, lamenting, grieving, and wailing, ran in the direction the eagle had gone, but could not find it. Therefore, they held a memorial service for her.⁴

Eight years passed. At the end of the eighth month, in the autumn of the seventh year of the dog, in the reign of the emperor who resided at the Palace of Nagara-no-Toyosaki in Naniwa 難波長柄豊前宮,⁵ her father happened to lodge for the night in Kasa district, Tanba province 丹波國加佐郡.⁶ Wishing to wash his feet, he accompanied his host's daughter who had been sent to the village well to get water. Around the well there were some village girls who snatched away the daughter's pail and would not allow her to draw water. They joined together to bully her, saying, "You, who were not eaten by the eagle, why don't you have any manners!" They shouted all kinds of abusive remarks and hit her, so that she came home crying. The host⁷ asked, "Why are you crying?" Whereupon the traveller told him what he

9. 感應 *kannō* means a mysterious correspondence between Buddhas and all sentient beings. Every prayer or vow addressed to Buddha elicits a response owing to the unity of existence. See Chap. II(3)b, n. 147.

1. Cf. *Fusō ryakkei* (IV, Kōgyoku), *Konjaku monogatari shū* (XXVI, 1), *Mizukagami* (II, Kōgyoku), etc. A similar plot is found in the legend on Rōben 良弁 (689–773), the charismatic founder of Tōdai-ji. See II.21; Yanagita, "Densetsu," *Telhon Yangaia Kunio shū*, V, 88–90.

2. Empress Kōgyoku (642–645), whose palace was situated in present Asuka-mura, Takechi-gun, Nara-ken. This event took place in 643.

3. Present Mikata-gun, Hyōgo-ken 兵庫縣美方郡.

4. 修福 *shūfuku*; holding a Buddhist service on a person's behalf to store up merit for his well-being in the other world.

5. Emperor Kōtoku (645–654), whose palace was situated at present Ōsaka-shi.

6. The coastal area of the Maizuru Bay

had seen in detail, and asked why it was. The host replied, "At such and such a date, I was up in a tree to catch doves, when an eagle carrying a baby flew from the west and dropped it in the nest to be eaten by the young eagles. The baby screamed in fear, and the young eagles hesitated to peck at it. This is the girl whom I brought back from the nest and reared." The date of the accident and this story identified the girl as the lost child of the traveler. Crying bitterly, the traveler told the host the entire story of how an eagle had flown away with his baby daughter. When the host understood all the circumstances, he agreed to return the girl to her real parents.

Ah! This father happened to stay with the lost child's foster parents and finally regained his child. We surely know what sympathy Heaven⁸ had for them, and how deep the parent-child relation is. It is a miraculous event.

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On a Man's Rebirth as an Ox for Labor and Showing an Extraordinary Sign Because of Stealing from His Son¹

In the central village of Yamamura in Sou upper district, Yamato province 大和國添上郡山村,² there was once a man who was called Lord Kura no iegimi 橘家長.³ In the twelfth month he wanted to atone for his past sins by having a Mahayana scripture recited.⁴ Therefore he ordered his servant, "Go and call a monk."⁵ The servant asked,

7. 家主 *iegimi*; see I.2, n. 5.

8. 天 *ten*; although the Buddhist influence is not so strong in this story, it does show how intricately karma is interwoven and points out that, with the intervention of Heaven, miraculous interrelationships exist.

1. Cf. *Myōhōki* (III, On Wang 王, Yū 璦, etc.), *Fusō ryakki* (IV, Saimen), *Konjaku monogatari* (XIV, 37). See II.15.

2. Present Obiotoke, Nara-shi 奈良市帶解. According to the *Ryō no gige*, "Ko-ryō," Articles 1 and 2, a village, *sato* 里, consists of fifty households, but less in mountainous or remote areas; a great district 大郡 consists of from 16 to 20 villages; an upper district 上郡, from 12 to 15; a middle district 中郡, from 8 to 11; a lower district 下郡, from 4 to 7; a small district 小郡, from 2 to 3. An alternative reading is Sou no kami district. 村 *mura* is not legally defined, but consists of twenty houses or less.

3. Although *iegimi* 家長 is a common noun meaning "the head of the family," it is used here as a popular name; *kura* means "storehouse." See n. 10, below.

4. *Hōkō-kyō*; see Chap. II(1)a, n. 8.

5. *Zenji*; obviously it means "monk" in general.

"To which temple shall I go to find a monk?" The master answered, "I have no preference; you may invite any monk you happen to meet." Thereupon the servant brought home a monk whom he had met on the way, as he had been told. The master put faith⁶ in this monk and made offerings.⁷

In the evening when the monk was retiring after the service,⁸ the host⁹ made him a bed with quilts, and the monk was tempted to take the quilts rather than wait to receive offerings the next morning. Then he heard a voice saying, "Don't steal the quilts." Startled, the monk looked around and found only an ox standing under the eaves of the storehouse.¹⁰ When the monk approached the ox, it began to speak: "I am the father of Iegimi, the master of this house. In my previous life I stole ten sheaves¹¹ of rice belonging to my son in order to give them to others. Because of that, I was reborn in the form of an ox to make up for my evil deed. How dare you, who have entered the priesthood, steal the quilts? If you want to know whether or not my story is true, make a seat for me. I will come to lie on it so that you may know that I am the father of your host." The monk passed the night stricken with shame.

The next morning, after the service, he said to his host, "Have the other people withdraw." Then he summoned the host's family and told them the story he had heard the night before. The host went to the ox in grief and made a seat of straw, saying, "If you are my real father, will you take this seat?" And the ox knelt down and lay on the seat. All the relatives cried bitterly, and the host said that the ox was really his father. The host stood up and, with a bow, said to the ox, "I will cancel the accounts in your former life." At this the ox sighed and shed tears. The ox died at four o'clock that afternoon, whereupon the host presented the quilts and offerings to the monk and accumulated merits¹² for his deceased father.

We cannot but believe in the law of karmic causality.

6. 信心 *shinjin*, the mind to believe in the Three Treasures. See I.15, n. 7.

7. 供養 *kuyō*, a translation of Skt. *pūjā*, which means making offerings of food, clothes, incense, flowers, candles, etc., to the Three Treasures.

8. 禮經 *raikyō*, *rai* means worship and *kyō* means scripture recitation.

9. 檀越 *tanichō*, sponsor of the service, one who makes offerings.

10. 倉下 *kura no moto*, which means literally "under the storehouse"; if it is a storehouse on stilts, the floor is several feet elevated from the ground, and it is possible for a man to take shelter under it. See Naoki Kōjirō, "Kura no moto no gogi ni tsuite," *Shōku Nihongi kenkyū*, VII (No. 7, July 1955), 178-181.

11. One sheaf yields about a quarter bushel of rice, according to the *Ryō no gige*, "Den-ryō," Article 1.

12. 功德 *kudōku*; see Chap. I(1)b, n. 50.